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ABSTRACT

Two reports on the current status and future trends of state assessment programs are presented. Among the results summarized for 1977-1978 and also presented in chart form for the 41 states which administer testing programs are: 19 programs are mandated by state legislatures: 22 programs test all students in the grades or ages assessed: mathematics and reading are the subjects most frequently tested: 30 programs use objectives prepared on the state or local level: 29 programs use tests prepared by external contractors: data are reported to the legislature in 33 programs: and data influence resource allocations in 5 programs. Among future trends, considerations include: using assessment data to determine minimum competency: sampling student competency: adding some areas and grades: deleting grades: and assessing educable mentally retarded and other populations. Findings are also detailed and charted for 1978-1979 and point toward an increase in criterion-referenced testing: the additions of writing, science, social studies, and the humanities to testing programs: and greater educational accountability to state legislatures and state boards of education. (MH)

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STATE ASSESSMENT PROGRAMS: CURRENT STATUS AND A LOOK AHEAD

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Bensonville, Illinois
June 15, 1978
June 12, 1979

STATE ASSESSMENT PROGRAMS: CURRENT STATUS AND A LOOK AHEAD

Statewide assessment [or testing] programs were conducted by forty-one states during 1977-78. The purpose of this presentation is to describe the programs briefly and present you with future plans.

During March, we sent out questionnaires to the fifty states. All forms were returned or completed by telephone [a copy of the questionnaire and a directory of the respondents is included with this paper].

The intent of the author was to learn the answers to several questions:

1. Why does a state assessment program exist?
2. How many students are assessed [all or a sample]?
3. What is the content?
   What grades or ages are assessed?
   Who prepares the tests; and
   Where do the tested objectives originate?
4. To whom are the data presented?
5. What use is made of the data?
6. What parts of the assessment are subcontracted?
7. What is planned for future assessments?
8. What additional features of assessment programs will make a more complete report?

Questions 1 - 6 are answered in chart form later in this paper. However, let me briefly summarize these for you.

1. State assessment programs exist in 19 states due to a legislative mandate. The other 22 programs exist due to enabling legislation, mandate from the state board of education, state guidelines, etc.

2. Twenty-two state programs test all [or all except some special education students] in the grades or ages assessed. Twenty-one state programs use sampling. Sampling may be random, matrix sampling, or sampling due to a voluntary program [as in Nebraska]. Some state programs assess all students at some grades and sample students at the same or other grades, usually for pilot tests or for item tryouts.

3. The content areas tested most frequently are mathematics and reading [37 states], followed by language [24], science [9], and social studies [7]. The 'other' category includes career development, reading readiness, and other somewhat more broadly stated, more inclusive goals, e.g. self-esteem, health, appreciating human accomplishments [Pennsylvania]. Ten states assess ability. Twenty-three states used standardized instruments while 30 used non-standardized, criterion, or objective referenced instruments.

The objectives assessed come from state-local sources for 30 programs, from commercial sources [16], and 8 use NAEP objectives.

Contractors prepare instruments for 29 programs and 19 states prepare instruments [in part or total].

4. The data from the programs are reported to the legislature in 33 programs, to the state board in 34, to districts in 36, to students in 18, to parents in 16, and to others, usually as public releases or news releases, in 4.

5. The data are used for distribution of funds in 5 programs, for instructional monitoring or guidance in 15, for curriculum accountability or evaluation in 21, for diagnosis in 20, and for other purposes, such as career guidance, in 16.

6. Although some states conduct programs internally; contractors provide tests for 23 programs, items for 18, scoring for 26, and data analysis and interpretation for 16.

Some states [that are not listed] do conduct statewide status studies [Oklahoma] or needs assessments [Arkansas]. Other state departments of education [Wyoming & Kansas] do not want to encourage any statewide assessment program.

What may be in the future for assessment? Among the considerations are:

Use of assessment data for determining minimal competencies [Alabama, Hawaii, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia, and West Virginia];

Sampling rather than testing all students [Arizona];

Adding some areas and grades [California, Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Illinois, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, North Dakota, Ohio, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Wisconsin];

Deleting a grade or more [California, Mississippi];

Assessing EMR, Adult High School with functional literacy [Florida];

Changing from random sampling to census testing to emphasize remediation in basic skills [Kentucky];

Piloting new items [Michigan, Louisiana, South Carolina].

[Additionally, all students on Guam are tested and all students on Puerto Rico will be tested next year.]

	Why		How Many		Content, Grades Used, Characteristics, & Objectives of Instruments														Data to						Use of Data					Sub-contracts			
	Legislation	Other	All	% Sampled	Reading	Mathematics	Language	Science	Social Studies	Other	Ability	Standardized	Non-Standardized	State-Local	Commercial	NAEP	State prepared	Contractor-prepared	Legislature	State Board	Districts	Students	Parents	Other	Funding	Instruction	Curriculum	Diagnosis	Other	Tests	Items	Scoring	Interpretation
Alabama		X	X		2,4,6,8	2,4,6,8	2,4,6,8			2,4,6,8	X	X			X			X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X					
Alaska		X		20	4,8	4,8					X	X	X	X				X		X	X	X	X					X	X	X		
Arizona	X		X		3	5						X							X	X	X	X	X					X			X	X
California	X		X		2,3,6,12	6,12	6,12			6,12			X	X			X		X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X				X	X
Connecticut	X			5					4,8,11	4,8,11			X		X			X	X	X				X	X	X	X				X	
Delaware		X	X		1,4,8,11	1,4,8,11	1,4,8,11				X	X	X	X				X	X	X	X	X						X	X	X	X	X	X
Florida	X		X		3,5,8,11	3,5,8,11	3,5,8,11			11			X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Georgia		X	X		4,8,10	4,8,10	11			4,8		X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
Hawaii		X		X	4,8,11	4,8,11						X		X				X		X	X				X	X	X	X	X		X	
Illinois		X		3	4,8,11	4,8,11		4,8,11		4,8,11	X		X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X						X	X				
Iowa	X																															
Kentucky		X								4,8,11		X			X			X	X	X					X	X	X	X	X			
Louisiana	X		X		4,8,11								X	X				X	X	X	X						X	X	X				
Maine		X		X	3,11	7,11	3,11	11		7,11				X				X	X	X	X						X			X	X	X
Maryland	X		X		3,5,7	3,5,7	3,5,7					X						X	X	X	X									X	X	X	X
Massachusetts		X		X	3,7,11	3,7,11	3,7,11	3,7,11	3,7,11	3,7,11	X		X	X			X	X	X	X	X											X	
Michigan	X		X	X	4,7,10	4,7,10				K,1			X	X				X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X	X
Minnesota		X		5	4,8,11	4,8,11		4,8,11	4,8,11				X	X				X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X		X	X
Mississippi	X		X		4-9	4-9	4-9						X	X			X		X	X	X					X	X	X				X	
Missouri		X		3	6,12	6,12					X	X			X			X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X		X			
Montana		X		50						6,12			X	X				X		X	X					X			X		X		
Nebraska		X		X	X	X	X			6,12			X	X			X	X			X					X	X				X	X	
New Hampshire		X				4,8,12	4,8,12		4,8,12	X			X	X			X				X								X				
New Jersey	X		X		3,6,9,11	3,6,9,11				4,8,12		X	X	X	X	X								X									
New Mexico		X	X		5,8,10,11	5,8,10,11	5,8,10,11						X	X				X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X				X	X	X	
New York		X	X		3,6	3,6						X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X
North Carolina	X		X		1,2,3,6,9	1,2,3,6,9	1,2,3,6,9					X							X	X	X				X	X	X				X		
North Dakota		X		20	3,8,11	3,8,11						X	X	X				X	X	X	X	X	X				X	X		X	X	X	X
Ohio	X			2	4,8,12	4,8,12	4,8,12	4,8,12			X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X			X									
Oregon		X		42	4,7,11	4,7,11	4,7,11					X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X		X	X	X	X	X
Pennsylvania	X			22	5,8,11	5,8,11	5,8,11			5,8,11			X	X			X				X							X	X	X	X	X	X
Rhode Island	X			25	4,8,11	4,8,11	4,8,11			4,8,11		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X								X	X	X	X	X
South Carolina	X		X		3,6,11	3,6,11	3,6,11	3,6,11	3,6,11	3,6,11		X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X		X		X	
Tennessee		X		X	4,8,12	4,8,12	4,8,12	4,8	4,8		X	X			X					X	X								X				
Texas		X		10	6,11	6,11	3,6,11			3,6,11		X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X									X	X	X	X	X
Utah	X			15		5,11		5,11		5,11		X	X	X				X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X			X			X
Vermont		X	X		K,1-12	K,1-12	K,1-12			K,1-12			X	X			X		X	X	X	X	X					X	X				
Virginia	X		X		4,8,11	4,8,11					X	X	X	X				X		X				X				X	X				
Washington	X		X	3	4,8,11	4,8,11	4,8,11					X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X	X	X	X	X		
West Virginia		X	X		3,6,9,11	3,6,9,11	3,6,9,11	3,6,9,11	3,6,9,11	3,6,9,11	X	X			X			X	X	X	X	X	X				X	X	X		X	X	X	
Wisconsin	X			14	4,8,12	4,8,12	4,8,12			4,8,12		X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X					X	X		X	X	X	X

QUESTIONNAIRE

Name _____ Title _____

Address _____ City, State, Zip _____

Telephone Number of Person Completing Form _____

1. Does your state conduct a State Assessment Program? YES NO

   A. Is this due to Legislative Mandate? YES NO

   B. If not, by what authority, permission, or mandate is the Assessment conducted?

_____

_____

2. Grades (or ages) tested? _____

   A. Approximate Number of students tested each grade _____

   B. Is the total population tested? YES NO

   C. If not, sampling procedure used: _____

_____

   D. Percent of population in sample _____

_____

3. Subjects (or content areas) tested _____

   A. Student's ability tested? YES NO

   B. Standardized Tests used? YES NO

   C. Non Standardized; Criterion-Referenced? YES NO

   D. Source (s) of objectives tested? _____

_____

   E. Who prepares tests? Contractor Teachers Staff Members

   F. Who reviews/approves tests? Contractor Parents Teachers Students

   Citizens not covered above

4. Dissemenation of Assessment Program Data

   ___ Report to Legislature

   ___ Report to State Board

   ___ Report to Districts

   ___ Report to Parents of students tested

   ___ Report to Students tested

5. Use of Data

___ Distribution of funds

___ Instruction monitoring

___ Curriculum accountability

___ Diagnosis, prescription

___ Other (please describe or list) _____

_____

6. What aspects of state assessment program are accomplished by out side contractor?

___ Tests

___ Items

___ Scoring

___ Data analysis -- pre- and post-interpretation meetings

Note: If the Assessment program is mandated, please enclose a copy of the legislation and/or mandate.

1978 - 1979 and beyond

1. Please report here changes or additions in the state assessment program that are now known.

_____

_____

2. State here areas that are proposed for assessment or that may be assessed in the future (to the best of your knowledge).

_____

_____

3. Please list additional subject (or content) to be assessed and the source of those objectives.

_____

_____

4. State here any information about your assessment program not covered above that you believe will assist in making this report most complete.

_____

_____

Please return this form by April 10, 1978. I will prepare a preliminary description and send it to you by May 5, 1978. This will give you an opportunity to add to or correct information about your program and return it to me by May 15, 1978. I can then prepare the final report and send it to you.

Thank you for your assistance. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

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STATE ASSESSMENT PROGRAMS: CURRENT STATUS AND A LOOK AHEAD

I am using the same title as last year for this part of the program since it is descriptive of what I will present.

In May, 1979, a survey was sent to the fifty State Departments of Education to be responded to by the director of a state assessment program, or the director's designee.

We received responses from thirth-seven states and were unsuccessful in contacting the others, so in some cases this report is incomplete. In the case of the states from which no reply was received, we used one of two approaches: 1) where programs existed and were listed for 1977-78, we simply duplicated the information; 2) where we received no information, we left the area blank. The obvious exceptions are Idaho, Indiana, and Nevada, which we skipped totally but had information on Idaho and Indiana, and so made some estimates on that basis.

Here are the highlights of the following charts:

1) Alabama tested all students every grade 1 through 12. For the next year, the prediction is only grades 1-6, and 8 will be tested.

2) Arkansas will be conducting a more comprehensive assessment than the sampling presently conducted during 1979 - 80.

3) Connecticut will be conducting a more extensive program, assessing all students in several grades.

4) Delaware tested all students in grades 1 - 8, and 11. and will add. a replication of NAEP writing assessment and an item pool for district use in meeting graduation requirements (proficiency testing).

5) Georgia will be adding kindergarten assessment in 1980, perhaps grade 1 in 1981.

6) Hawaii tested writing in grades 2,4,6,8,10, and will be testing Foundation Program Objectives for the class of 1983 and beyond. These objectives are similar to those in Oregon, Pennsylvania, and Maryland.

7) Idaho assesses on a pilot sampling basis in the areas of reading, writing, and mathematics. Almost all work is done within the department.

8) Indiana Schools must prepare objectives and use tests for them in areas that are determined by the textbook adoption cycle: 1978-79 Language Arts, 1979-80 Social Studies, etc. No state tests required.

9) Iowa schools must test but have a choice of the Iowa Tests or others.

10) Kansas now has a total assessment program as compated with the pilot test in 1977 - 78. The program tests all students in grades 2,4,6,8, and 11.

11) Maryland uses both standardized and non-standardized tests and will likely add writing, survival skills, citizenship, and world of work in 1979 - 80.

12) Massachusetts will be adding listening and speaking tests. Schools can choose state tests or others of their choice, if approved.

13) Michigan may assess career development and health, in 1979 - 80, and continues to have, with Florida and New Jersey, one of the most comprehensive assessment programs in terms of coverage.

14) Minnesota may expand the assessment to include humanities, and life skills. Assessment is on a sampling basis.

15) New Jersey may add testing as a graduation requirement, test for bilingual and handicapped students, and writing skills tests.

16) North Carolina may add writing as a part of the grade 4 competency test program.

17) Ohio legislation may eliminate the assessment.

18) Oregon will be using calibrated items from an item bank for assessment, and has used holistic scoring for part of writing assessment.

19) Pennsylvania continues to have the greatest number of areas assessed and two additional areas will be Analytical Thinking and Environment (after 1980).

20) South Carolina has adopted a first grade test and is continuing on a twelve-year program implementing state wide tests, one year at a time, for proficiency-competency.

21) South Dakota proposes assessing grades 3,6, and 9 with standardized tests of language arts, reading, science, social studies, and mathematics.

22) Texas may add social studies and science.

23) Virginia may add social science and job preparation to the graduation requirements of reading and mathematics tests. Calibrated item pools are under development.

24) Wisconsin anticipates writing and science in the future. LEA's can opt for state tests. Use of calibrated items is underway for test construction.

To summarize briefly, testing in state assessment programs, for proficiency, competency, or graduation, is on the increase. The trend continues toward criterion referenced tests to match state or local objectives.

Additions to assessment programs are the areas of writing (with writing samples required), science, social studies, then humanities (art, music, etc.).

The data are most frequently reported to legislatures and state boards of education, and in states where sampling is the method of assessment, students and parents are not informed of the results.

The data are used most frequently for instructional diagnosis, then for curriculum and group instructional uses.

The future appears to include more testing rather than less as legislators and the other publics interested in education demand greater accountability through test scores.

For additional information, please don't hesitate to contact:

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	Why		How Many		Content, Grades Used, Characteristics, & Objectives of Instruments													Data to						Use of Data						Sub-contracts			
	Legislation	Other	All	% Sampled	Reading	Mathematics	Language	Science	Social Studies	Other	Ability	Standardized	Non-Standardized	State-Local	Commercial	NAEP	State-prepared	Contractor-prepared	Legislature	State Board	Districts	Students	Parents	Other	Funding	Instruction	Curriculum	Diagnosis	Graduation	Other	Tests	Items	Scoring	Interpretation
Alabama		X	X		4,6,8	4,6,8	4,6,8			4,6,8	X	X			X			X	X	X	X	X	X			X		X			X		X	
Alaska		X		25	4,8	4,8							X	X				X		X	X												
Arizona	X		X		3	5						X						X	X	X	X	X	X				X		X	X	X	X	
Arkansas																			X	X	X	X	X					X		X			X	X
California	X		X		1,3,6,12	6,12	6,12			6,12			X	X			X		X	X	X					X	X						X	
Colorado																									X	X								
Connecticut	X			5									X		X			X	X	X	X					X	X	X			X	X	X	X
Delaware		X	X		1-8,11	1-8,11	1-8,11					X		X			X	X	X	X	X					X	X	X			X	X	X	X
Florida	X		X		3,5,8,11	3,5,8,11	3,5,8,11						X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X				X	X	X			X	X	X	
Georgia	X		X		4,8,10	4,8,10				4,8		X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X		X	X	X
Hawaii		X		X						2,4,6,8,10		X		X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X			X		X	
Illinois		X		2	4,8,11	4,8,11						X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X			X	X		
Iowa													X	X	X		X		X	X	X								X				
Kansas	X		X		2,4,6,8,11	2,4,6,8,11							X					X	X	X	X									X		X	X	
Kentucky		X								4,8,11		X		X				X	X	X	X					X	X			X	X		
Louisiana	X		X		4,8,11								X	X				X	X	X	X						X	X		X	X	X	X
Maine		X		X	3,11	7,11	3,11	11		7,11			X	X				X	X	X	X						X			X	X	X	X
Maryland	X		X		3,5,7	3,5,7	3,5,7					X	X					X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Massachusetts		X		X	12	12				12	X		X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X		X		
Michigan	X		X	X	4,7,10	4,7,10				K,1			X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Minnesota		X		15	4,8,11	4,8,11		4,8,11	4,8,11				X	X				X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X			X		X	
Mississippi	X		X		4-9	4-9	4-9					X	X					X	X	X	X					X	X	X			X		X	
Missouri		X		3	6,12	6,12					X	X			X			X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X			X			
Montana		X		50						6,12			X	X			X	X		X	X					X	X			X	X		
Nebraska		X		X	X	X	X			6,12			X	X			X	X			X					X	X					X	X
New Hampshire		X				4,8,12	4,8,12			X			X	X			X				X									X				
New Jersey	X		X		3,6,9,11	3,6,9,11			4,8,12	4,8,12		X	X	X	X	X								X									
New Mexico		X	X		5,8,10,11	5,8,10,11	5,8,10,11						X	X				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X
New York		X	X		3,6	3,6						X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X			X	X	X	X	X
North Carolina	X		X		1,2,3,6,9,11	1,2,3,6,9,11	1,2,3,6,9,11					X							X	X	X				X	X	X			X				
North Dakota		X		14	4,8,11	4,8,11						X	X	X				X	X	X	X	X	X				X	X	X		X			
Ohio	X			2	4,8,12	4,8,12	4,8,12	4,8,12					X	X	X	X	X			X	X									X				
Oklahoma	X			2	3,6,9,12	3,6,9,12					X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X								X	X	X	X	X	X
Oregon		X		30	4,7,11	4,7,11	4,7,11					X	X						X	X	X					X					X			
Pennsylvania	X			22	5,8,11	5,8,11	5,8,11				X		X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X				X	X	X	X
Rhode Island	X			25	4,8,11	4,8,11	4,8,11			5,8,11		X		X							X						X			X		X		
South Carolina	X		X		3,6,11	3,6,11	3,6,11	3,6,11	3,6,11	4,8,11		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X					X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X
South Dakota										3,6,11		X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X			X		X	
Tennessee		X	X		8,10	8,10	8,10				X		X					X	X	X	X	X	X	X					X	X	X	X		
Texas		X		13						5,8,11	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X	X	X	X		
Utah	X			15		5,11		5,11		5,11		X	X	X				X	X	X	X					X	X			X		X	X	
Vermont		X	X		K,1-12	K,1-12	K,1-12			K,1-12			X	X			X		X	X	X					X	X			X			X	
Virginia	X		X		1-6,8,10,11	1-6,8,10,11		1-6,8,10,11		1-6,8,10,11	X	X	X	X				X	X	X	X	X	X			X				X				
Washington	X		X	X	4,8,11	4,8,11	4,8,11					X						X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
West Virginia		X	X		3,6,9,11	3,6,9,11	3,6,9,11	3,6,9,11	3,6,9,11	3,6,9,11	X	X			X			X		X	X	X	X	X		X	X			X	X			
Wisconsin	X			5	4,8,12	4,8,12	4,8,12			4,8,12		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X					X	X			X	X			
Wyoming																											X	X		X		X		